

**From:** Domenech, Douglas  
**To:** [Scott Hommel](#); [Nancy Guiden](#); [Mashburn, Lori](#); [Daniel Jorjani](#); [James Cason](#); [Megan Bloomgren](#)  
**Subject:** Interior Cabinet Report for 3/15/17  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 15, 2017 12:30:15 PM  
**Attachments:** [DOI DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS 3-15-17.docx](#)

---

Attached and copied below.

## **DOI DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS – 3/15/17**

Doug Domenech, Senior Advisor

### **Status of the Secretary**

The Secretary will be in Washington, DC on the Wednesday. He spoke to the Awaken America Conference.

The Secretary will resume his travel in Montana and Wyoming Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Thursday March 16: Travel to Bozeman, MT. Potential BUDGET media.

Friday March 17: Bozeman/Yellowstone. Press conference in front of arch announcing historic park visitation. Meeting with Yellowstone National Park about maintenance backlog and bison management issues.

Saturday March 18: Meeting with Sen. Murkowski in Bozeman area.

Sunday March 18: Fly to DC

### **Announcements**

#### **Press Announcement Yesterday: Secretary Zinke Celebrates 114 Years of National Wildlife Refuge**

**System:** Yesterday the Secretary recognized the 114<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities contributed more than \$144.7 billion in economic activity across the United States, according to the FWS's most recent [National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation](#), published every five years. More than 90 million Americans, or 41 percent of the United States population age 16 and older, pursue wildlife-related recreation. The report [Banking on Nature](#) shows that refuges pump \$2.4 billion into the economy and support more than 35,000 jobs.

#### **Press Announcement Today: Zinke Announces Major Lease on Federal Lands: BLM Issues Lease for 6,175.39 acres holding 55.7 million tons of recoverable coal. Canyon Fuel submitted the winning bid of \$22,850,000 in Central Utah.**

**Press Announcement Today:** Interior will auction wind development rights to 122,400 acres of the Atlantic Ocean near North Carolina's Outer Banks. The Kitty Hawk Wind Energy Area, covering 191 square miles of outer continental shelf roughly 24 miles from the beaches where the Wright brothers achieved first powered flight in 1903, has an opening bid price of \$244,810, or \$2 per acre.

**Press Announcement:** On Friday, DOI Announces \$3.74 Million for Species Recovery in 12 States.

### **Executive Orders**

The Department is awaiting EO on Energy (several) (understand looking like next week) and an EO on National Monuments.

### **Congressional Action Under the CRA** (No change)

**CRAs:** Pending WH Action.

- BLM Planning 2.0 Rule. When will the President sign?

**CRAs:** Passed the House, Pending in the Senate.

- BLM Venting and Flaring Methane Rule
- FWS H.J.Res.69 - Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Department of the Interior relating to "Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska".

### **Secretary Meetings and Schedule**

Further out.

3/31: Participate in the 100<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the purchase of the Virgin Islands from Denmark. The Danish Prime Minister will participate.

**ASSISTANCE NEEDED FROM CABINET AFFAIRS:**

The Secretary is requesting that he attend this important event at the request of the President.

The Secretary is requesting military aircraft assistance with this trip.

The Secretary is requesting the White House provide a Proclamation and/or letter he can read from the President acknowledging the commemoration. Interior has provided a draft.

### **Speaking Invitations (No change from yesterday.)**

#### **Outstanding Invitations in Process**

3/20 Address to the National Water Resources Association's Federal Water Issues Conference

3/23 Address to the American Petroleum Institute's Board of Directors Meeting (DC, Trump Hotel)

3/23 Address the Student Conservation Association's 60th Anniversary Commemoration (DC)

3/28 Address to the Public Lands Council Legislative Conference (DC)

4/3 North America's Building Trades Unions National Legislative Conference (DC, Washington Hilton)

4/5 Association of Equipment Distributors & Equipment Dealers Association (DC, Liaison Hotel)

4/5-7 National Ocean Industries Assoc (NOIA) 2017 Annual Meeting (DC, Ritz Carlton)

4/13 Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy's Global Energy Summit (NYC)

#### **Accepted**

3/30-31 U.S. Virgin Islands Transfer Centennial Commission (St. Croix, St. Thomas)

### **Emergency Management**

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Community Lake, in the Tucker Community, was inspected on Tuesday morning due to the deterioration of its dam, where an area of concern was noted along the lake's dam. An inspection yesterday suggests that dam failure is imminent. The Tucker Community Lake is considered a low hazard dam, meaning that loss of life is not likely and that arterial traffic routes would be minimally impacted, should the dam fail. Vehicular traffic across the dam appears to have been the leading contributor to the current situation, and all traffic crossing has been blocked at this time.

In Oklahoma, the Howell Fire began on March 10 in Osage County (BIA) and has burned 1,900 (no change) acres. The fire is 50 (+10)-percent contained and being managed by a Type-4 Incident Management Team (IMT) with 8 (no change) personnel assigned, all of which are DOI personnel. There are 10 (no change) residential structures threatened, and the containment date has been set for March 25. Additional perimeter growth is not expected.

The Milsap Fire, which began on March 2 in Osage County (BIA), remains at 9,636 (no change) acres burned. The fire is 75 (+5)-percent contained and managed by a Type-4 IMT with 6 (no change) personnel assigned, all of which are DOI personnel. There are no structures threatened, and the containment date remains March 25. Additional perimeter growth is not expected.

The Tucker Fire began on March 3 in Seminole County, OK (BIA) and has burned 1,030 (no change) acres to date. The fire is 80 (+5)-percent contained and managed by a Type-4 IMT with 20 (no change) DOI personnel assigned. Full containment is expected today.

## **Media of Interest**

### **National Wildlife Refuge System Celebrates 114 Years.**

KPVI-TV Idaho Falls, ID (3/14) reports that on Tuesday, the National Wildlife Refuge System celebrated its 114th anniversary. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, “This past Saturday, I visited the National Bison Range in Moiese, Montana, to speak with refuge managers and get a better understanding of both the habitat and the management of the range. In addition to the range, the Refuge System has millions of acres of public lands and waters that provide quality hunting and fishing in addition to other recreation activities.” He added, “Our wildlife refuges are an incredible asset to the national economy, bringing tourism and recreation jobs as well as revenue from spending in local communities. At the same time, refuges offer a place where families can carry on cherished outdoor traditions while making the important connection between people and nature. It worries me to think about hunting and fishing becoming activities for the land-owning elite. Refuges are an important part of making sure that doesn’t happen.”

### **Analysis: Secretary Zinke Faces Looming Controversial Issues.**

The High Country (CO) News (3/15, Wiles) reports that so far, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke’s “stated priorities for Interior have been vague but unsurprising: rebuilding trust between the public and the department, increasing public lands access for sportsmen, and improving outdated infrastructure at national parks.” However, “considering the controversial

issues embedded in those priorities he'll soon have to wrangle, the ride won't stay smooth for long." According to the article, "perhaps the biggest questions around Zinke's Interior are how he will balance a mining and drilling-friendly agenda with habitat conservation and access to public lands, as well as how he will achieve his priorities if President Donald Trump follows through with major budget cuts."

### **Timber Group Files Suit Against Cascade-Siskiyou Monument Expansion.**

The Medford (OR) Mail Tribune (3/14, Freeman) reports that "a timber-industry group has joined the growing list of entities asking the federal courts to invalidate" last year's expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. The American Forest Resource Council "filed suit Friday in federal court claiming President Barack Obama illegally used the Antiquities Act to add thousands of acres of O&C Act lands in the monument expansion, contradicting a 1940 Department of the Interior legal opinion stating O&C lands can't be pulled from production." The article notes that "it is the third federal suit filed since Feb. 3 seeking to nullify the expansion of the monument east of Ashland by 47,624 acres." According to the article, "nearly identical lawsuits were filed Feb. 13 by the Oregon Association of O&C Counties and Feb. 17 by the Murphy Co., which owns about 2,000 acres within the monument footprint."

### **Congressional Hearing To Hear About Marine Monument Concerns.**

The AP (3/14) reports that New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell is "traveling to Washington, D.C. to express concerns of port communities about the federal government's approach to marine monument designations." Mitchell will testify at a hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Water, Power and Oceans on Wednesday. The article notes that "a coalition of commercial fishing groups this month filed a lawsuit challenging former President Barack Obama's decision to create a national monument off the coast of New England, using his executive authority under the Antiquities Act."

### **Coal Country Sees Small Mining-related Job Growth.**

The Washington Post (3/14, Bump) reports that February job gains announced last week showed little gains specifically for coal mining, a Trump campaign pledge. Coal mining makes up only a small part of the mining sector broadly and job gains were mostly in "support activities for mining," which the BLS defines as "support services, on a contract or fee basis, required for the mining and quarrying of minerals and for the extraction of oil and gas."

### **Inspector General Reports to be released tomorrow. (No press expected.)**

- Lack of adequate financial controls at NPS.
- Alleged Favoritism by an ONRR Supervisor.

## **White House Communications Report** (sent to WH Comms yesterday)

### **Inquiries**

- Fusion (Renee Lewis) – REQUEST – Status of California Condor reintroduction and Zinke’s commitment to “gut protections” of species. RESPONSE – Refused to accept the premise of the question. Corrected the reporter on multiple “sources” used. Got them to a place where they admitted their shoddy research and gave them a quote that Zinke is meeting with bureau and agency heads to get a deep understanding of the projects they have in progress and looks forward to working with stakeholders on a variety of projects under Interior’s jurisdiction.
- POLITICO (Esther Wielden) REQUEST – Asked if there are plans to roll out the budget via a press call or presentation. RESPONSE – TBD

### **Top Stories**

EE News: BLM blocked from starting ATV trails in Bears Ears

Bloomberg: Trump to Drop Climate Change From Environmental Reviews ...

SF Examiner: Bay Area national parks receive record number of visitors in 2016

### **Top Issues and Accomplishments**

Today @SecretaryZinke reached 10,000 organic Twitter followers

- Today Secretary Zinke did a ride along with U.S. Park Police. The USPP patrol much of Washington, D.C., including the GW Parkway, Memorial Bridge, Rock Creek Parkway and i395. They also have jurisdiction over much of D.C. because of proximity to various National Parks sites. Benny Johnson at IJR covered. Multiple stories expected ranging from support for federal law enforcement, seeing problems of bureaucracy affecting the front lines (in this case the disrepair of national parks sites), Zinke’s patriotism and passion for fallen warriors.
- Today Secretary Zinke announced the 114th anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- Later this week, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will recommend approval of permits to conduct seismic studies on the potential of Atlantic Ocean energy resources.
- Launching a “Travels with Z” blog on our website that is Secretary Zinke’s travel blog going to America’s public lands and his work on the front lines improving land management for multiple use (energy, recreation, conservation, economy)
- On Friday, Zinke will meet with leadership and staff at Yellowstone National Park. No press planned.

## **Federal Register Notices Cleared for Publishing (None Significant)**

Items cleared for the Federal Register on Tuesday.

REG0006835 OS Federal Register Notice of the Invasive Species Advisory Committee Meeting via Teleconference Federal Register Notice of the Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC) via teleconference call. The sole purpose of the call scheduled for March 29, 2017 is to discuss and consider white papers generated by the ISAC task teams on Fed/State and Fed/Tribal Coordination. Notice 03/14/2017

Doug Domenech  
Senior Advisor  
US Department of the Interior

## **DOI DAILY UPDATE FOR CABINET AFFAIRS – 3/15/17**

Doug Domenech, Senior Advisor

### **Status of the Secretary**

The Secretary will be in Washington, DC on the Wednesday. He spoke to the Awaken America Conference.

The Secretary will resume his travel in Montana and Wyoming Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Thursday March 16: Travel to Bozeman, MT. Potential BUDGET media.

Friday March 17: Bozeman/Yellowstone. Press conference in front of arch announcing historic park visitation. Meeting with Yellowstone National Park about maintenance backlog and bison management issues.

Saturday March 18: Meeting with Sen. Murkowski in Bozeman area.

Sunday March 18: Fly to DC

### **Announcements**

#### **Press Announcement Yesterday: Secretary Zinke Celebrates 114 Years of National Wildlife Refuge**

**System:** Yesterday the Secretary recognized the 114<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Hunting, fishing, and other outdoor activities contributed more than \$144.7 billion in economic activity across the United States, according to the FWS's most recent [National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation](#), published every five years. More than 90 million Americans, or 41 percent of the United States population age 16 and older, pursue wildlife-related recreation. The report [Banking on Nature](#) shows that refuges pump \$2.4 billion into the economy and support more than 35,000 jobs.

**Press Announcement Today: Zinke Announces Major Lease on Federal Lands:** BLM Issues Lease for 6,175.39 acres holding 55.7 million tons of recoverable coal. Canyon Fuel submitted the winning bid of \$22,850,000 in Central Utah.

**Press Announcement Today:** Interior will auction wind development rights to 122,400 acres of the Atlantic Ocean near North Carolina's Outer Banks. The Kitty Hawk Wind Energy Area, covering 191 square miles of outer continental shelf roughly 24 miles from the beaches where the Wright brothers achieved first powered flight in 1903, has an opening bid price of \$244,810, or \$2 per acre.

**Press Announcement:** On Friday, DOI Announces \$3.74 Million for Species Recovery in 12 States.

### **Executive Orders**

The Department is awaiting EO on Energy (several) (understand looking like next week) and an EO on National Monuments.

### **Congressional Action Under the CRA (No change)**

**CRAs:** Pending WH Action.

- BLM Planning 2.0 Rule. When will the President sign?

**CRAs:** Passed the House, Pending in the Senate.

- BLM Venting and Flaring Methane Rule

- FWS H.J.Res.69 - Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the final rule of the Department of the Interior relating to "Non-Subsistence Take of Wildlife, and Public Participation and Closure Procedures, on National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska".

### **Secretary Meetings and Schedule**

Further out.

3/31: Participate in the 100<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the purchase of the Virgin Islands from Denmark. The Danish Prime Minister will participate.

### **ASSISTANCE NEEDED FROM CABINET AFFAIRS:**

The Secretary is requesting that he attend this important event at the request of the President.  
The Secretary is requesting military aircraft assistance with this trip.  
The Secretary is requesting the White House provide a Proclamation and/or letter he can read from the President acknowledging the commemoration. Interior has provided a draft.

### **Speaking Invitations (No change from yesterday.)**

#### **Outstanding Invitations in Process**

3/20 Address to the National Water Resources Association's Federal Water Issues Conference  
3/23 Address to the American Petroleum Institute's Board of Directors Meeting (DC, Trump Hotel)  
3/23 Address the Student Conservation Association's 60th Anniversary Commemoration (DC)  
3/28 Address to the Public Lands Council Legislative Conference (DC)  
4/3 North America's Building Trades Unions National Legislative Conference (DC, Washington Hilton)  
4/5 Association of Equipment Distributors & Equipment Dealers Association (DC, Liaison Hotel)  
4/5-7 National Ocean Industries Assoc (NOIA) 2017 Annual Meeting (DC, Ritz Carlton)  
4/13 Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy's Global Energy Summit (NYC)

#### **Accepted**

3/30-31 U.S. Virgin Islands Transfer Centennial Commission (St. Croix, St. Thomas)

### **Emergency Management**

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Community Lake, in the Tucker Community, was inspected on Tuesday morning due to the deterioration of its dam, where an area of concern was noted along the lake's dam. An inspection yesterday suggests that dam failure is imminent. The Tucker Community Lake is considered a low hazard dam, meaning that loss of life is not likely and that arterial traffic routes would be minimally impacted, should the dam fail. Vehicular traffic across the dam appears to have been the leading contributor to the current situation, and all traffic crossing has been blocked at this time.

In Oklahoma, the Howell Fire began on March 10 in Osage County (BIA) and has burned 1,900 (no change) acres. The fire is 50 (+10)-percent contained and being managed by a Type-4 Incident Management Team (IMT) with 8 (no change) personnel assigned, all of which are DOI personnel. There are 10 (no change) residential structures threatened, and the containment date has been set for March 25. Additional perimeter growth is not expected.

The Milsap Fire, which began on March 2 in Osage County (BIA), remains at 9,636 (no change) acres burned. The fire is 75 (+5)-percent contained and managed by a Type-4 IMT with 6 (no change) personnel assigned, all of which are DOI personnel. There are no structures threatened, and the containment date remains March 25. Additional perimeter growth is not expected.

The Tucker Fire began on March 3 in Seminole County, OK (BIA) and has burned 1,030 (no change) acres to date. The fire is 80 (+5)-percent contained and managed by a Type-4 IMT with 20 (no change) DOI personnel assigned. Full containment is expected today.

## **Media of Interest**

### **National Wildlife Refuge System Celebrates 114 Years.**

KPVI-TV Idaho Falls, ID (3/14) reports that on Tuesday, the National Wildlife Refuge System celebrated its 114th anniversary. Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke said, "This past Saturday, I visited the National Bison Range in Moiese, Montana, to speak with refuge managers and get a better understanding of both the habitat and the management of the range. In addition to the range, the Refuge System has millions of acres of public lands and waters that provide quality hunting and fishing in addition to other recreation activities." He added, "Our wildlife refuges are an incredible asset to the national economy, bringing tourism and recreation jobs as well as revenue from spending in local communities. At the same time, refuges offer a place where families can carry on cherished outdoor traditions while making the important connection between people and nature. It worries me to think about hunting and fishing becoming activities for the land-owning elite. Refuges are an important part of making sure that doesn't happen."

### **Analysis: Secretary Zinke Faces Looming Controversial Issues.**

The High Country (CO) News (3/15, Wiles) reports that so far, Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke's "stated priorities for Interior have been vague but unsurprising: rebuilding trust between the public and the department, increasing public lands access for sportsmen, and improving outdated infrastructure at national parks." However, "considering the controversial issues embedded in those priorities he'll soon have to wrangle, the ride won't stay smooth for long." According to the article, "perhaps the biggest questions around Zinke's Interior are how he will balance a mining and drilling-friendly agenda with habitat conservation and access to public lands, as well as how he will achieve his priorities if President Donald Trump follows through with major budget cuts."

### **Timber Group Files Suit Against Cascade-Siskiyou Monument Expansion.**

The Medford (OR) Mail Tribune (3/14, Freeman) reports that "a timber-industry group has joined the growing list of entities asking the federal courts to invalidate" last year's expansion of the Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument. The American Forest Resource Council "filed suit Friday in federal court claiming President Barack Obama illegally used the Antiquities Act to add thousands of acres of O&C Act lands in the monument expansion, contradicting a 1940 Department of the Interior legal opinion stating O&C lands can't be pulled from production." The article notes that "it is the third federal suit filed since Feb. 3 seeking to nullify the expansion of the monument east of Ashland by 47,624 acres." According to the article, "nearly identical lawsuits were filed Feb. 13 by the Oregon Association of O&C Counties and Feb. 17 by the Murphy Co., which owns about 2,000 acres within the monument footprint."

### **Congressional Hearing To Hear About Marine Monument Concerns.**

The AP (3/14) reports that New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell is "traveling to Washington, D.C. to express concerns of port communities about the federal government's approach to marine monument

designations.” Mitchell will testify at a hearing of the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Water, Poser and Oceans on Wednesday. The article notes that “a coalition of commercial fishing groups this month filed a lawsuit challenging former President Barack Obama’s decision to create a national monument off the coast of New England, using his executive authority under the Antiquities Act.”

### **Coal Country Sees Small Mining-related Job Growth.**

The Washington Post (3/14, Bump) reports that February job gains announced last week showed little gains specifically for coal mining, a Trump campaign pledge. Coal mining makes up only a small part of the mining sector broadly and job gains were mostly in “support activities for mining,” which the BLS defines as “support services, on a contract or fee basis, required for the mining and quarrying of minerals and for the extraction of oil and gas.”

### **Inspector General Reports to be released tomorrow. (No press expected.)**

- Lack of adequate financial controls at NPS.
- Alleged Favoritism by an ONRR Supervisor.

### **White House Communications Report (sent to WH Comms yesterday)**

#### **Inquiries**

- Fusion (Renee Lewis) – REQUEST – Status of California Condor reintroduction and Zinke’s commitment to “gut protections” of species. RESPONSE – Refused to accept the premise of the question. Corrected the reporter on multiple “sources” used. Got them to a place where they admitted their shoddy research and gave them a quote that Zinke is meeting with bureau and agency heads to get a deep understanding of the projects they have in progress and looks forward to working with stakeholders on a variety of projects under Interior’s jurisdiction.
- POLITICO (Esther Wielden) REQUEST – Asked if there are plans to roll out the budget via a press call or presentation. RESPONSE – TBD

#### **Top Stories**

EE News: BLM blocked from starting ATV trails in Bears Ears

Bloomberg: Trump to Drop Climate Change From Environmental Reviews ...

SF Examiner: Bay Area national parks receive record number of visitors in 2016

#### **Top Issues and Accomplishments**

Today @SecretaryZinke reached 10,000 organic Twitter followers

- Today Secretary Zinke did a ride along with U.S. Park Police. The USPP patrol much of Washington, D.C., including the GW Parkway, Memorial Bridge, Rock Creek Parkway and i395. They also have jurisdiction over much of D.C. because of proximity to various National Parks sites. Benny Johnson at IJR covered. Multiple stories expected ranging from support for federal law enforcement, seeing problems of bureaucracy affecting the front lines (in this case the disrepair of national parks sites), Zinke’s patriotism and passion for fallen warriors.
- Today Secretary Zinke announced the 114th anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System.
- Later this week, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management will recommend approval of permits to conduct seismic studies on the potential of Atlantic Ocean energy resources.
- Launching a “Travels with Z” blog on our website that is Secretary Zinke’s travel blog going to America’s public lands and his work on the front lines improving land management for multiple use (energy, recreation, conservation, economy)

- On Friday, Zinke will meet with leadership and staff at Yellowstone National Park. No press planned.

**Federal Register Notices Cleared for Publishing (None Significant)**

Items cleared for the Federal Register on Tuesday.

REG0006835 OS Federal Register Notice of the Invasive Species Advisory Committee Meeting via Teleconference Federal Register Notice of the Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC) via teleconference call. The sole purpose of the call scheduled for March 29, 2017 is to discuss and consider white papers generated by the ISAC task teams on Fed/State and Fed/Tribal Coordination. Notice 03/14/2017